



The Burma Buddhist World-Mission

WHAT IT IS,

WHAT IT DOES,

AND WHY!

Headquarters:-

No. 7, East Block,
SULE PAGODA,
RANGOON.

(Care of Sule Pagoda Trust)

BUDDHA SASANA LOKAHITA SAMITI

(Burma Buddhist World-Mission)

VIRIYA —

SILA —

METTA

FOREWORD

This booklet is intended to give you some idea of the aims and work of the Burma Buddhist World-Mission.

If you are a Buddhist, convinced of the truth of the Dhamma proclaimed by Lord Buddha, the great Teacher of gods and men —

If you are proud of the culture and traditions of your religion and the historic part it has played in civilising the world —

If you feel that in a wider understanding of the Dhamma lies the only hope for the peace of mankind and the future of civilisation —

If knowledge of the Dhamma has brought *you* happiness and peace of mind and you would like it to do the same for all beings —

Please study this little book carefully, give copies to all your friends, and ask yourself:

**"What can I do to help the B. B. W-M.
to promote the Sasana of Lord Buddha
in the World of to-day?"**

What Is The B. B. W-M?

The Buddhasasana Lokahita Samiti was founded in Rangoon by a group of Buddhists under the Presidentship of the Anagarika P. Sugatananda (Mr. Francis Story, the English Buddhist writer and lecturer of the Maha Bodhi Society of India). It is affiliated with the Maha Bodhi Society by the fact of sharing the same objects and also by the fact that its founder-members are all members of the Maha Bodhi Society. It is, however, an entirely independent Burmese organization, with its own methods of spreading the Dhamma, its own governing body and its own rules and regulations.

Its chief object is to make known and propagate the **Theravada Buddhism of Burma** in its pure form, and for that purpose it has its own way of approaching the task.

Its second most important aim is to present the Dhamma in a vital, up-to-date manner and to make it a living influence in the modern world.

The founders of the B. B. W-M. maintain that the pure, unadulterated truth of Theravada Buddhism as taught by Lord Buddha is valid for all time and for all nations. Unlike the doctrines of other religions, it does require altering or modifying to bring into line with present-day knowledge. **It is already in advance of the most Progressive ideas in the World**, scientifically, culturally and ethically.

It must be presented to the World in a worthy manner and in a way that will command the attention and respect of intelligent and thoughtful people of all nations and creeds.

Up-to-date methods must be employed in propagating it. Through adverse circumstances, Buddhism has for several centuries remained in obscurity, and the world outside Buddhist countries has been ignorant of its noble teachings, with the result that materialism has deluded mankind and religion has decayed in the West and is beginning to decay in the East. Now is the time for a great Buddhist revival. The Burma Buddhist World-Mission believes that only Buddhism can save the world at this critical juncture. If you share that belief, help the Mission in every way you can. As you read these pages, many ways in which you can do this will present themselves to you. This book is written for you, because we want your help and co-operation. Remember that every effort you make towards promoting the Sasana is for the benefit and welfare of all sentient beings. It is the greatest work of merit to which you can devote yourself.

The Burma Buddhist World-Mission Objects

- 1 To promote Buddhist knowledge and stimulate a living interest in the principles of Buddhism in the modern world by translating and publishing Burmese and Pali religious literature in English and publishing translations of English Buddhist literature in Burmese in order to familiarise the West with Buddhist philosophical teachings from original sources and at the same time to make known in Burma and elsewhere the scientific nature of Buddhism as revealed by modern science.
- 2 To form study and discussion groups and to hold public lectures on all aspects of Buddhism, particularly on the Dhamma in relation to present-day problems.
- 3 To promote the study of the ancient principles of Buddhist life and bring them into practical relationship with the life of to-day.
- 4 To publish periodicals, reviews or magazines devoted to Buddhism, as and when opportunity arises.
- 5 To work in co-operation with approved existing Buddhist associations in Burma and elsewhere with the object of widening their sphere of influence and providing a channel for their work to reach non-Buddhist countries.

Viriya : Sila : Metta

What the B. B. W-M. Is Doing Now

Holding regular public meetings and giving public lectures on all aspects of Buddhism.

Holding Discussion Groups for bringing the light of Buddhism on to questions relating to modern life.

Translating works on Buddhist philosophy by Burmese scholars and Sayadaws into English.

Maintaining a bookshop and agency for the sale and distribution of Buddhist books in English and Burmese.

Contributing articles on Buddhism in the popular press in Burma and elsewhere.

Maintaining friendly and helpful relations with Buddhist organizations in many different countries to promote international solidarity between Buddhist peoples as a bulwark against anti-religious materialism.

Holding English classes for Missionary Phonyis.

What The B. B. W-M. Plans To Do

Publish translations and original works on Buddhism in inexpensive form.

Publish a monthly magazine giving the Buddhist point of view on current topics and events.

Extend and amplify its present activities in every way possible.

Organise a Mission to Prisons for the reformation of delinquents.

Re-establish religious values in modern life and oppose the influence of materialistic ideas hostile to the spiritual welfare of mankind.

To carry out this programme we need your help either actively or financially.

Toward A World-Sasana

With the approach of the 2500th year of Lord Buddha's dispensation the Sasana is reaching the period of its maximum influence in the world. This coincides with a great need that exists for a renaissance of spiritual values to-day, when the nations stand in deadly peril of a third world conflict engendered by hatred, greed for power and materialistic thinking. Other religious influences have failed to raise mankind to the spiritual level necessary for the abolition of war, and the reason for this is to be found in ignorance of the law of Karma.

Destruction breeds destruction; but one who realises the impermanence and Dukkha of all life—he alone can have the true universal heart of compassion that cherishes all beings, great and small, and will not inflict suffering or take the life of any for the gratification of his own pleasure.

The problem before every earnest follower of the Dhamma who cares for the welfare of his fellow-men, is, therefore, how to spread this teaching throughout the world. Now is the time to do it, but there are many great obstacles to be overcome.

Buddhism *can* be spread, but a new drive is needed—a vigorous and vital surge of determination allied with knowledge of the obstacles and a method of overcoming them. The best of all methods of persuasion is example. It is no use

trying to convince people of the truth of Buddhism and the happiness and peace it brings, if our own lives are disorganised and undisciplined. The whole world is crying out for peace, happiness and a sane and stable way of life—the best possible proof of the truth of Buddhism is to show that it can bestow these blessings. The modern mind demands concrete evidence that a plan is practical, that it works in daily life, before accepting it. Western civilisation spread across the earth *because it showed results*; its benefits were purely of a material kind, but they were there to be tested and proved. Now people everywhere are becoming disgusted with mere materialism; it has not given them the lasting happiness which is the real basis of each individual man's striving. Buddhism can give them something more noble and enduring than the worldly gods they have followed and worshipped—a Way of life that will lead them ultimately to the final extinction of suffering. They must be persuaded to try it; there is no other way. Fresh needs call for fresh methods and strenuous endeavour. Buddhism must emerge from its Asiatic strongholds and meet the challenge of the twentieth century in street, office and factory. Instead of a negation it must become an affirmation—strong, positive and vital. This cannot be done by adherence to the rigid scholasticism of past centuries and routine expositions of obscure texts. These things are the dry husks, the mummified remains, of religion. They must be vitalised with the living spirit of creative power. Only when this has been

achieved can we expect to see the world enjoying the blessing of a universal Buddhist Sasana.

ANAGARIKA P. SUGATANANDA.

Abridged from "*The Burman*"

Rangoon: 21, 1. 1950.

Why Another Buddhist Organisation?

by

Francis Story.

Text of a Broadcast talk given on Burma Radio
English Programme, 24th March 1950.

"Why another Buddhist organization?" That is a question which has been put to me by a number of people since, with U Maung Maung Pye and others I started the "Burma Buddhist World-Mission" or, to give it its Pali title, the "Buddhasasana Lokahita Samiti".

It is true there are already scores of Burmese Buddhist organizations, each doing excellent work in its own sphere. This is good: it is a sign of the religious vitality of Burma, a sign of the vitality of the Sasana as a whole. But there is room for more yet, and I certainly think there is room—and not only room, but a crying need—for another organisation along the particular distinctive lines of the Burma Buddhist World-Mission. I shall try to tell you why I think so, and why my opinion is shared by so many thinking people in Burma to-day.

Let us take the fundamental facts. No one will deny that at this moment the world needs Buddhism, and needs it badly. Burma herself needs a revival of the spirit of Buddhism that existed, say, fifty years ago or even less. No one, in Burma at least, will deny also that what is needed is *true* Buddhism—the Buddhism of

Theravada, the actual historical Teaching of Lord Buddha, free from alien accretions and perversions—the Dhamma which is pure and everlasting, and which can bring peace, sanity and righteousness to the world and happiness to mankind.

Very well then: there is the need and there is the answer to the need. All that is required is the means of bringing the two together. So the problem resolves itself into one of the best means of presenting the Dhamma to the modern world. Here the operative word is "modern". It is the modern world to which we have to present Buddhism, a world which has changed rapidly of recent years and is still changing under our very eyes. A world, moreover, in which religion is no longer held in very high esteem. In approaching this task, old methods will not do; methods which are too high and metaphysical also will not serve the purpose. An approach which is too abstruse and academic fails to touch the hearts or lives of the people, just as one that is too naive will never convince the scientifically minded,

The noble truths of Buddhism are simple truths, they appeal to the heart as well as to the mind. They shine forth with a pure and constant radiance. They are capable of transforming the life of the individual and of mankind into something higher and better; by their means man can, literally, step into the realm of the gods. Buddhist morality likewise is simple—simple and universal and for all time. It is this aspect of Buddhism, together

with its scientific truth, which we believe should be stressed if Buddhism is to become a living power in the world to-day.

The Burma Buddhist World-Mission has therefore drawn up a programme which places this well to the fore. Its motto is "*Viriya, Sila, Metta*"—Energy, Morality, Benevolence.

We hope that all existing Buddhist organisations in Burma, and later in other countries, will find in co-operation with the Mission an opportunity to expand the scope of their work. Not the least important part of our programme is the training of Phonyis who desire to become missionaries. Classes in English are being held for this purpose, and a series of lectures on comparative religion is to be commenced, to run in conjunction with discussion-groups. These latter will give opportunity for practising the art of debate and public speaking, and students who attend them will get a very good idea of the awkward type of questions they are likely to be asked by intelligent non-Buddhists.

The translation of two books from Burmese into English, both works by the late Ven'ble Ledi Sayadaw, has been begun; others will follow. The Mission has appointed a Religious Advisory Council of Sanghas to guide its translators in matters of doctrine where this should become necessary. No limit has been fixed to the number of Sanghas to be invited to this Council, and we hope that we shall obtain the assistance of some of the most prominent Sayadaws.

prestige of Burma as a repository of Buddhist wisdom had not been sufficiently appreciated because hitherto it had been a locked treasury. The time had come to unfasten the doors and let humanity as a whole share in the precious knowledge which had been Burma's heritage for so many centuries. At the same time it was necessary to bring Buddhism into the lives of the people of Burma as a vital source of inspiration and to make the message of love and compassion given by Buddha shine so brightly in the land that it would be a torch to light the way for all mankind.

Reprinted from "*The New Times of Burma*".

Burma Buddhist World-Mission.

U Lun Baw's Plea For Collective Effort

U Lun Baw, Chairman, Public Services Commission, Rangoon Development Trust, delivered the third of the series of public lectures being held by the Burma Buddhist World-Mission on Saturday last. Speaking on the imperative necessity for spreading the knowledge of Buddhism at the present time, U Lun Baw stressed the importance of collective effort and urged the Buddhists of Burma to exert themselves in the field of Buddhist propaganda.

It was a long time, the speaker said, since Burma had been in a position to promote Buddhism, but now that the country is free and independent it had become a duty to spread the Dhamma by every possible means. Knowing the state of the world at present, threatened as it is by materialism and anti-religious ideologies, we should not take an easy-going attitude over this vital question but should consider by what means we could foster the religion which is so sorely needed, and having decided on a means, work at it diligently and energetically. Laymen, as well as Phongsis, should think of themselves as being able to contribute their share to Buddhist missionary work.

Reviewing present activities in this direction, U Lun Baw had some thought-provoking observations to make, and pointed out a few of the handicaps under which Buddhist associations

as a whole were working. Many of these difficulties could be removed, he stated, by people taking a more active part in the task. The use of English as a medium he stressed as being essential, since English is the language most widely understood by all classes of people. He also made an impressive plea for a united Sangha and more contact with other Buddhist countries, for Buddhism makes no distinction of nation or race.

Programme Of The B. B. W-M.

The speaker then went on to outline the programme now being carried out by the Burma Buddhist World-Mission and expressed the hope that it would receive the fullest co-operation from the public. He also asked Sanghas to help the Mission by becoming members of its Religious Advisory Council, which is composed entirely of Phongyis. Several of these Sayas were present at the lecture. U Lun Baw said he was pleased to announce that already over a hundred Phongyis had enrolled themselves as students of the Mission's classes and that these classes would open shortly. He also hoped that it would soon be possible for the Mission to publish a Buddhist monthly periodical, as there is a great need for this.

Reprinted from "The Burman" and
"The New Times of Burma"

Namo Buddhaya
Buddhasasana Lokahita Samiti

The Burma Buddhist World-Mission

President: Anagarika P. Sugatananda
(Francis Story, F. M. S. B.)

Vice-President: U Maung Maung Pye, M.A., M.J.L.

Vice-President &

Hon. Treasurer: U Lun Baw

Hon. Secretary: U Saw Tun Teik, Advocate.

Rules And Constitution

- 1 Membership is open to all Buddhists by birth or conversion who are in sympathy with the objects of the Mission and who voluntarily pledge themselves to do all in their power to propagate the Dhamma on the lines laid down in the Objects of the Mission.
- 2 Members will not be required to pay any subscription as this is a free association of people who undertake to do active work to further the aims for which it is formed: namely, the propagation of the Dhamma by practical means.
- 3 If at any later date it is considered desirable to institute a Membership Fee, this will be decided upon and fixed by a Meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 4 Application for Membership will be made in writing to the President or Hon. Secretary and all applications will be placed before the

How You Can Help The B. B. W-M.

To Spread the Teaching of Lord Buddha
throughout the World

If you

Can translate—

Can lecture on Buddhism—

Can hold classes in languages or Buddhist
philosophy—

Can do any active work for the Sasana—

—or—

If you would like to help our work by
making a donation please communicate with

The Hon. Secretary,

The Burma Buddhist World-Mission,

No. 7 East Block,

Sule Pagoda,

(C/o Sule Pagoda Trust),

RANGOON.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

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NAMO TASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMA—SAMBUDDHASSA

THE

Burma Buddhist World-Mission

ဗုဒ္ဓသာသနာ လောကဗိတ သမဂ္ဂ အဖွဲ့ကြီး။

No. 7, East Block, Sule Pagoda, (C/o Sule Pagoda Trust.)
RANGOON.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I, the undersigned, being a follower of the Dhamma, wish to become an Active Member of the Burma Buddhist World-Mission and undertake to adhere faithfully to the principles of the Mission and to do all that lies in my power to propagate the Buddhist Doctrine for the welfare of mankind and all sentient beings, by the Grace of the Triple Gem, THE BUDDHA, THE DHAMMA AND THE SANGHA.

NAME (in block letters)

SIGNED

ADDRESS

DATE

VIRIYA-SILA-METTA

SAKTHI PRESS
RANGOON.